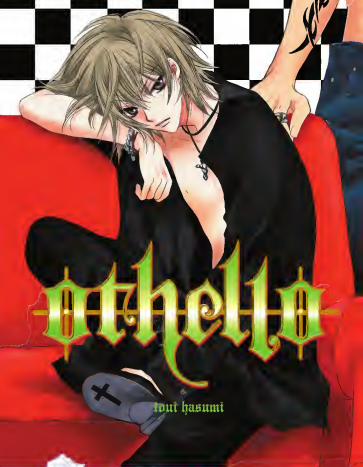
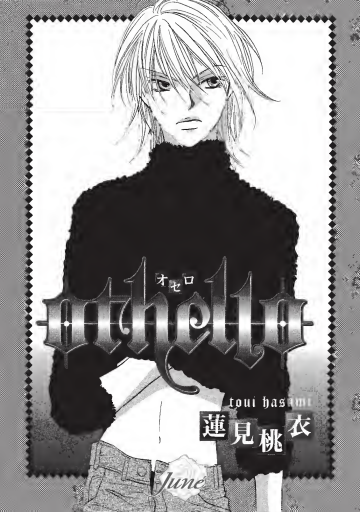




June

Yaoi  Manga



オセロ

othello

toui hasami

蓮見桃衣

June

Othello

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Afterword	187

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PLEASE
LEAVE A
MESSAGE
AFTER THE
BEEP.

I AM
CURRENTLY
OUT.

SHUFF

SHUFF



BAM

I AM NOT
HERE.



AYUMUR
ARE YOU
THERE?

I HAVE A
MESSAGE
FROM YOUR
MOTHER...

ATSUMI
HAS BEEN
KILLED
IN AN
ACCIDENT.

DROP

DRIP

YOU NEED
TO GO
THERE
RIGHT
AWAY.

THE
ADDRESS
IS -

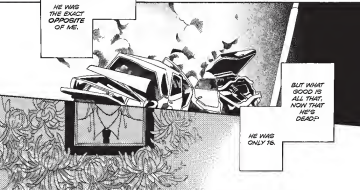
U...
GH...
I FEEL
SICK...



EVERYONE
THOUGHT MY
TWIN BROTHER,
ATEUSHI
ARISE, WAS
SEEMINGLY
PERFECT.

"SMART, KIND,
ACCOMPLISHED"
— THOSE WERE
THE ADJECTIVES
USED TO
DESCRIBE HIM.

HE WAS
THE EXACT
OPPOSITE
OF ME.



BUT WHAT
GOOD IS
ALL THAT,
NOW THAT
HE'S
DEAD?

HE WAS
ONLY 18.



MY
NAME IS
AYURAJI
MINAGE.

I JUST
MOVED
HERE LAST
MONTH.

AND NOW,
I'M THE
ONE
STANDING
HERE.

HEY, HEY
— DID
YOU SEE?

YEAH!
HE LOOKS
EXACTLY
LIKE HIM!

I WAS
SHOCKED
— THEY'RE
LIKE
MIRROR
IMAGES
OF EACH
OTHER.

THEY'RE SO
IDENTICAL—
IT'S
ALMOST
LIKE
SEEING A
GHOST.

IT
HAPPENED
JUST AS
AUTUMN
WAS
ENDING.



...I HOPE
YOU'LL
ALL BEAR
WITH ME.

I HAVEN'T
BEEN HERE
LONG, SO I'M
SURE THERE
ARE MANY
THINGS I'LL
NEED TO
LEARN, BUT...



カ
タ
7
CLATTER

WHAAAT?
IT'S TOO EMBAR-
RASSING

HEY,
GO TALK
TO HIM.



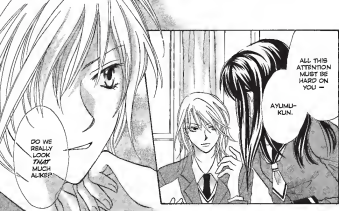
GO AHEAD
AND TAKE
THAT FREE
SEAT IN THE
BACK ROW.

OH -

I MEAN,
THE ONE
BY THE
WINDOW.



...SO
SOMEONE'S
ABSENT,
HUH?



DO WE
REALLY
LOOK
THAT
MUCH
ALIKE?

ALL THIS
ATTENTION
MUST BE
HARD ON
YOU —

AYUMU-
KUN.



...AFTER
ATSUSHI DIED,
I CAME HERE
TO TOKYO TO
LIVE WITH MY
MOTHER.

OUR PARENTS
GOT DIVORCED
WHEN WE WERE
YOUNG —
WE GROW UP
SEPARATELY.

WHAT?!

YOU MEAN
YOU DON'T
KNOW?!



GOAL IS
NEARER
THAT WAY!

SEE THEM?
ATSUSHI'S
FANGIRLS.

LOOK
OVER
THERE.

OH,
BEING
TOLD —

I SEE —
SO YOU
TWO HADN'T
MET IN ALL
THAT TIME...
BUT YOU DO
LOOK JUST
LIKE HIM.

ANNOYING,
AREN'T THEY?
IT ISN'T EVEN
ATSUSHI
WHO'S HERE
NOW...
IT'S MOM,
AYUMU-KUN.

I PICKED
UP THE
PIECES
HE LEFT
BEHIND,
MAKING
MYSELF FIT
INTO HIS
IMAGE —

AND JUST
LIKE IN
SOME
CHEESY
SUSPENSE-
DRAMA, I
ASSUMED
ATSUMI'S
IDENTITY.

U.. UM,
MINASS-
KUN?

WOULD YOU LIKE
TO WALK HOME
WITH US TODAY?
IF YOU WANT, WE
CAN SHOW YOU
AROUND THE
NEIGHBORHOOD.

NO...

I DON'T
MIND.

I BECAME
MINASSKUN.





ANOTHER
TIME, THEN!

N... NO,
THAT'S
OKAY!



MAYBE
NEXT TIME.

SORRY,
BUT I HAVE
AN ERRAND
TO RUN
TODAY...

SMILE



11月
LATER

COULD
HE
SUPPORT
ME?

UH...



ME...P

I'M
MAYUMI
NISHINO.

WELL THEN —
SEE YOU
TOMORROW,
NISHINO-SAN.

BE
STRICT
CARRY





...OKAY.

AYUMI

IT'S ME, MOTHER. I DON'T THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO COME HOME FROM WORK TODAY.

I'M SORRY - LET'S HAVE DINNER TOGETHER TOMORROW INSTEAD.



HANG ON A SEC.

plp

HELLO



I'LL JUST SPEND THE NIGHT AT A FRIEND'S AGAIN...

YEAH.

...SEE YOU.

IT'S TOO LATE FOR HER TO PLAY THE ROLE OF CARING MOTHER NOW.



ARE YOU
SURE?
ABOUT
STAYING
THE NIGHT...



HM...NICE
PLACE!
YOU GOT
HERE —

...MISTER.



IT'S FINE.
THERE'S
NO SCHOOL
TOMORROW
ANYWAY.

BEIDES,
THAT'S YOUR
INTENTION,
TOO —
ISN'T IT?



WELL,
AREN'T
YOU LUCKY,
THEN.

...
...
I'VE NEVER
SEEN —

...ANYONE
SO
PRETTY
AS YOU
BEFORE.
DO
YOU
RE
MEM



MM...



WHAT'S THIS
DUDE LOOKING
SO SHOCKED
ABOUT?



STARE -

UM,
HEY -

LET'S
GO THIS
INSIDE.
OKAY?

HASN'T HE
EVER BEEN
TWO MEN
KISSING
BEFORE?

...NO, I
GUESS
THAT IS
RARE.



SLAM





BUT MY
FACADE
REMAINS
PERFECT
AGAIN
TODAY.

GOOD
MORNING.



...OH.

TOMORU!
LONG TIME
NO SEE —



OH,
COME
ON.

QUITE
THE IDOL,
AREN'T
YOU?



WHERE HAVE
YOU BEEN?
YOU
DELINQUENT,
YOU.

WORKING
PART-TIME.

“SHE SINGS?”

HE'S
TOHRU
KRISHIMA.
YOU KNOW
THE GUY
WHO WAS
ABSENT
YESTERDAY.

OH.

THIS IS YOUR
FIRST TIME
MEETING HIM.
ISN'T IT,
AYUMU-KUN?

...HOW'S
IT
GOING?

TH... THIS
GUY - ?

OH...

UH - ...

HE'S THE
ONE FROM
LAST
NIGHT...!





WIMP HE'S
PROBABLY
NAPPING ON
THE ROOF.

*Academy
Kiyoko*



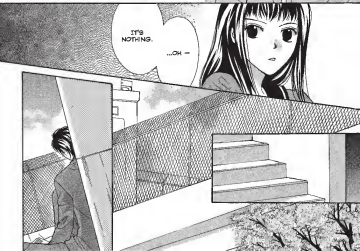
HUMP
WHAT'S
WRONG,
NISHIKIOP

*WIMP
STAY-I
YOU DON'T
WANT TO
UNITE
WITH
ME*

WOW —
HE SURE IS
BEAUTIFUL.



HAVE
YOU SEEN
KIRISHIMA-
KUN?



IT'S
NOTHING.

...OH —

...OH.

YOU'RE —

THAT'S RIGHT.
I'M THE ELITE
STUDENT YOU
SAW —

...DOIN' IT
ALL NIGHT
LONG IN
THE ROOM
NEXT TO
YOURS.

DESPERATE
ATTEMPT

DO
YOU...

...REMEMBER
ME?



W...
WAIT!

AREN'T
YOU
GOING
BACK?

CLASS
WILL BE
STARTING
SOON.



ABOUT THAT
NIGHT...
COULD YOU
NOT TELL
ANYONE
ABOUT IT?

ACTING

U...
—



I NEVER
INTENDED
TO.





...HE'S
LATE...

THAT WHOLE IS
EXHAUSTING



SO LATE.
DAMMIT HOW
LONG IS HE
GONNA MAKE
ME WAIT?

THAT
OLD
PROM?

OH
YEAH -

LIKE I'M
SUPPOSED
TO TRUST
THAT?

HE'S
SOMEONE
I KNOW

ACTION
IS
COOL



...HUMP



HAVE
YOU
COME TO
SEE ME
AGAIN?











IT'S BE
RETOUR?

...HEY.



真

暗

PITCH BLACK



WHAT'S
WITH THIS
GUY...PI
SO HE
INTENDS
ON GIVING
ME THE
COLD
SHOULDER
NO
MATTER
WHAT.
HUMP



FINE —
IF THAT'S
HOW HE
WANTS TO
PLAY IT,
THEN...



CREAK...



...SO HOW
ABOUT YOU
TEACH ME
INSTEAD?

I'M HAVING
TROUBLE
STAYING
AWAKE
DURING
CLASS...

SINCE
I WORK
NIGHTS...

...OKAY.

...HE'S A
STRANGE
ONE.

SHOW UP
LATE FOR
SCHOOL!

...KIRISHIMA.

WHAT?

OH
MAN...

NOW I
CAN'T GO
BACK TO
SLEEP
AFTER YOU
WOKE ME.



AND
REMEMBER!
KEEP YOUR
PROMISE!



SHP

WHY DO I
HAVE TO
BE LATE?

WE'RE
NOT
LITTLE
KIDS

BECAUSE
I'D BE
EMBARRASSED
TO SHOW UP
AT SCHOOL
WITH YOU!



FM...

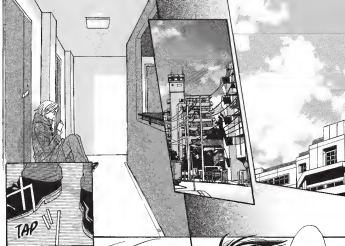
NOW...

SHANGHAI



NO
LONGER
ANYMORE





WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I'VE BEEN WAITING
FOR YOU.

WE'RE STUDYING,
RIGHT?

MINASE?

WHAT'RE
YOU
DOING
HERE?

IT'S
ALREADY
PAST TEN.



WHAT
ARE YOU,
MY MOM?
MY TEACHER?

DON'T WORRY
ABOUT THINGS
THAT DON'T
CONCERN
YOU!

NOW I'VE
REUNITED WITH
MY MOTHER
AFTER TEN
YEARS, BUT
SHE MIGHT
AS WELL BE
A STRANGER
TO ME.

IT'S A
COMMON TALE
NOWADAYS.
ISN'T IT? SO
YOU DON'T
HAVE TO
WORRY.

WON'T
YOUR FAMILY
WORRY?



UH...
I KNOW I'M
THE ONE
WHO ASKED
YOU TO
TUTOR ME.
BUT —

YOU HAVEN'T
BEEN HOME
ONCE THIS
WHOLE TIME.
HAVE YOU?

LEFT
HISST AND
THE HUSST
FACEST —



...HEY.

I'D
ALREADY
LEFT THE
HOUSE BY
THE TIME
I WAS
FIFTEEN.

MY FATHER,
LONG SINCE
DEPARTED,
TOOK CUSTODY
OF ME.

BUT IF YOU
REALLY WANNA
KNOW... MY
PARENTS GOT
DIVORCED
WHEN WE
WERE KIDS.



LET'S
HIT THE
BOOKS.

NOW —



...COULD IT BE —

... YOU'RE ACTUALLY PRETTY SMART?



I'VE ALWAYS RANKED IN THE TOP 20 IN GRADES.



I'M GOING TO SLEEP.

IT'S BETTER TO GO TO SLEEP.



YOU MUST HAVE AT LEAST ONE OR TWO HOME TUTORS ALREADY!

IT FIGURES! A LITTLE RICH BOY LIKE YOU, LIVING IN SUCH A HIGH-CLASS CONDO LIKE THIS...

... BUT I'M NOT A RICH BOY.





ARE ALL
TWINS SO
IDENTICAL?

THAT ATSUSHI...
HE WAS JUST
LIKE YOU — A
REALLY FINE
STUDENT, YOU
KNOW.

IT REALLY
IS ALMOST
AS IF
ATSUSHI'S
CAME
BACK TO LIFE.

...BUT
REALLY,
LOOKING
AT YOU —

THANKS —
YOU'RE A
BIG HELP,
MINASE.

IS THIS
WHERE
YOU WANT
THIS,
TEACHER?

OH —
NO, NO.
THANK YOU.

HUH?

HEY,
I'VE
GIVEN
IT UP
FOR
NOW.

OH!
SORRY...
DID I
OFFEND
YOU?

I SEE...
I GET IT NOW.

IT'S THE DAILY STRAIN OF
SWITCHING BETWEEN "MYLINE"
AND "ATSUSHI". THAT'S
WEARING ME DOWN.



BEAUTIFUL
AND
ATTEUSHI -

WHO WAS
BELOVED
BY ALL...

I'VE ALREADY
DECIDED THAT
I'M GOING
TO BECOME
"ATTEUSHI"

THIS IS
NOT GOOD.



ONLY IN FRONT
OF KIRISHIMA
AM I "ATTEUSHI"
MINASE?



BUT EVEN
SO...IT'S A
COMFORTING
PLACE TO BE.

AND WHEN
HE CALLS
MY NAME
LIKE THAT,

...YUMU.

AYUMU!

OH,
KIRISHIMA
...WHAT
IS IT?



OH...
UH...
YEAH.

WHADDA
YOU
SAY?

YOU'RE ALWAYS
WAITING OUTSIDE
MY DOOR, RIGHT?
I DON'T WANT
IT ON MY
CONSCIENCE
IF YOU FREEZE
TO DEATH...

IF YOU'RE
COMING OVER
TO MY PLACE
TONIGHT, I
THOUGHT I'D
GIVE YOU MY
KEY.



...I NEVER
KNEW —



HUH!

THEN HERE,
TAKE THIS.

...LATER.

I KNOW
I CAN'T GO
ON THIS
WAY, BUT...!

COULD IT
BE THAT
I'M EASILY
PUSHED
ALONG BY
SITUATIONS?



GUESS I
SHOULD
GIVE THIS
BACK...

LAST
ONE INTO
MY
BOTTLE



WELL, CERTAINLY



I'VE GOT
A BAD
FEELING...



IF IT
WERE ME,
I'D NEVER
MAKE
YOU CRY.

I WAS
A LITTLE
DRUNK
LAST TIME...
I APOLOGIZE.



MM...!

..H

MMPH...

TH...
TH...

THAT'S
ENOUGH!

SHUFFS

SHUFFS

!!

...THAT WAS PRETTY CON-VINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A SECOND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE "AYUMI" ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CONVINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A MIND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE 'AYUMI' ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET ON A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW?

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CON-VINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A SECOND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE "AYUMI" ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CON-VINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A SECOND? THAT I WAS ONE BEST FRIEND?

AND YOU FORGOT?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE 'AYUMI' ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR A WHILE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CON-VINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A SECOND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE 'AYUMI' ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CON-VINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A SECOND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE "AYUMI" ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CONVINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A SECOND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE 'AYUMI' ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CON-VINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A SECOND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE 'AYUMI' ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CON-VINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A SECOND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE 'AYUMI' ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CONVINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A SECOND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE 'AYUMI' ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —

...THAT WAS PRETTY CONVINCING FOR AN ACT.

YOU THINK?

THAT GUY HAS LONG SINCE GONE!

ADD ME A MIND? THAT WAS ONE BEST SHOW!

AND FOR YOU?

HEY, LISTEN!

OH WELL —

I SUPPOSE IT'S OKAY.

FOR ME TO BE 'AYUMI' ONLY HERE —

I DIDN'T REALIZE.

WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU A BUNDLE, YOU KNOW.

HEY, HEY —

MORNING —

LISTEN —



I FEEL
SORRY FOR
AYUMU-KUN!

...HIT?
COME TO
THINK OF IT
WASN'T THERE
A RUMOR
BEFORE ABOUT
KRISHIMA AND
ATSUSHI-KUN
GOING OUT
TOOO?

...BUT
YOU
MEAN
HE'S
NOT
TALKING?

WHAAAT?
THEN...
SO NOW
IT'S AYUMU-
KUN?

BUT THAT'S
JUST TOO
CONVENIENT!
I MEAN,
JUST
BECAUSE
THEY'RE
TWINS...

...TO USE
HIM AS A
"SUBSTITUTE"
...!

THIS
MORNING,
I SAW
AYUMU-KUN
WALKING TO
SCHOOL WITH
KRISHIMA

NOT ONLY
THAT, BUT THEY
SEEMED KINDA...
SUBSIDIARIES.





オセロ

oohello

IN-SIDE

touji hasumi
presents

- THERE'S
NO
PROOF...

IS
THERE...?

"COME TO THINK
OF IT, WASN'T
THERE A RUMOR
BEFORE ABOUT
KIRISHIMA AND
ATSUSHI-KUN
GOING OUT,
TOO?"

THWAP

"I'LL ADMIT
TAKEMASA
A MORE
ATTRACTIVE
GUY...
BUT I'VE
TALKED WITH
OTHER OF
THOSE GUYS,
AND STILL...

...
...
...



EVERYTHING
OF HIS —
HIS BOOKS,
HIS NOTES...
EVEN HIS
FRIENDS.

I
RESEARCHED
EVERYTHING
ABOUT
ATEUSHI.

THAT'S
RIGHT.



BUT THERE
WAS NOTHING
AMONG THEM
THAT HAD
ANYTHING TO
DO WITH
"TORU
KIRISHIMA".

I WAS ABLE
TO KNOW
EVERYTHING
ABOUT ATEUSHI
FROM ALL
THOSE THINGS.

KNOCK
KNOCK



EVEN IF I
FOUND ANY
INFORMATION,
WHAT WAS I
PLANNING
ON DOING
WITH IT?

—WHAT
AM I, AN
IDIOT?

— BUT —

ARE YOU
HOME?

AYUMU —



AYUMI...
DO YOU
REMEMBER?

...THE
TIME BEFORE
YOUR FATHER
AND I
SEPARATED...

...I REGRET
IT EVEN NOW.
LEAVING YOU
BEHIND -

ARE YOU
LOOKING FOR
SOMETHING...
HERE IN
ATSUSHI'S
ROOM?



CLACK
I DON'T
REMEMBER
SOMETHING
SO FAR IN
THE PAST.



" MOTHER...

HOLDING ON
TO SUCH
MEMORIES IS
USELESS.

WHAT I DO
REMEMBER
IS -

IT DIDN'T
MATTER TO
ME WHICH
ONE OF
THEM I TOOK
CUSTODY
OF...

AFTER ALL, IT
WOULDN'T BE
DECENT OF ME
TO FORCE THE
CARE OF BOTH
OF THEM UPON
MY EX-WIFE.

IT'S ALRIGHT —
THE HOUSEKEEPER
WILL LOOK AFTER
HIM. YOU WON'T
HAVE TO WORRY
ABOUT HIM
AT ALL.

WHAT AN
UNSOCCABLE
CHILD — IT'S
NOT VERY
CUTE OF HIM.

...FATH-

AYUMU —
THIS IS
YOUR NEW
MOTHER,
STARTING
FROM
TODAY.



I'M
HOME —



ATEUSHI,
WHERE ARE
YOU RIGHT
NOW?





JTELESH,
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING RIGHT
NOW?

WHAT
DO YOU
THINK HE'S
DOING...?

HE
COMES
HOME
SO LATE
THESE
DAYS.

HOW
SHOULD
I KNOW?
I -



...WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE, STEP-
MOTHER?

I TOLD
YOU TO
NEVER
ENTER MY
ROOM.
DIDN'T I?



...PRETTY,
AREN'T
YOU?

YOU DON'T
LOOK LIKE
HIM AT ALL.

DON'T CALL
ME "STEP-
MOTHER"...

AFTER ALL,
THAT'S NOT
HOW I
FEEL...



HEY,
LISTEN...

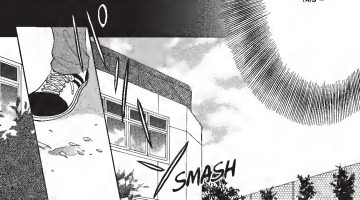
THE WORLD?
IT CAN SHATTER
SO EASILY...

...AS IF IT
WAS MADE
OF GLASS.

NO MATTER HOW
PROTECTIVE YOU
ARE OF IT, IT
CAN BE GROUND
UNDERFOOT -



DEEP
JUST LIKE
THIS -







...THERE
MUST BE
SOME-
THING
WRONG
WITH ME.



LETTING A
STUPID OLD
MEMORY
LIKE THAT
AFFECT ME...



ギョ...
CREAK...

THIS ISN'T
LIKE ME
AT ALL.



ギョ
TUG

...THEN AGAIN,
I'M NOT ATSUSHI
EITHER...

INFIRMARY

WHAT'S THE
MATTER
WITH ME?



THE
NOISE
WAS
EVEN
HERE!

CLATTER



...

THUD



TWITCH

...

YOU
ASLEEP?



MAYBE I
SHOULD
NEVER HAVE
COME TO
THIS PLACE...

THEN I
COULD HAVE
STAYED THE
SAME AS
ALWAYS --



SINCE
A LITTLE
WHILE
AGO.

CLASH
IN THEIR

WHISH

YOU...
HOW LONG
HAVE YOU
BEEN
STANDING
THERE?

///

WHY AM I
SO HUNG
UP ABOUT
THIS GUY
ANYWAY?

I WAS
SEARCHING
FOR
SOMETHING
ABOUT YOU
IN ATSUSHI'S
ROOM...

...WHEN
MOTHER
CAME IN
AND STARTED
TALKING
ABOUT THE
PAST...

MAKING ME
DREDGE UP
SOME OLD,
UNWANTED
MEMORIES...

HE DOESN'T
HAVE
ANYTHING
TO DO WITH
ATSUSHI.

...WHAT
WERE YOU
SPACING
OUT
ABOUT?

YOU SHOULD
NOT ASK
A LOT

WHAT'S
IT TO
YOU?

NOW THAT
I THINK
ABOUT IT,
IT'S ALL
BECAUSE
OF YOU!



YOU'RE
A FUNNY
GUY.



EVEN IF
HE DID...

...IT
DOESN'T
CONCERN
ME!



YOU'VE I CAN'T
FIGURE OUT
WHAT YOU'RE
THINKING...

YOU'RE LIKE
A CAT - IF
YOU'RE
HAPPY

YOU'RE
ENTERTAINING
TO WATCH.

WHAT?



YOU'RE
NOT LIKE
ATSUSHI
AT ALL.

IT'S
STRANGE

P

PANG

...WHY —

THAT'S THE
FIRST TIME
I'VE HEARD
THAT NAME
FROM HIS
LIPS —



WITH JUST THAT
ONE PHRASE —
...JAWZ?

"YOU'RE
NOT LIKE
ATEUSHI
AT ALL."

WHY DOES THE
MENTION OF
THAT ONE
NAME FROM
THIS GUY MAKE
ME FEEL SO
MUCH PAIN
INSIDE?



...COMPARING
ME AND
ATEUSHI LIKE
THAT —

WHICH ONE
DO YOU
PREFER?



IN TRUTH,
I DON'T
REALLY WANT
TO KNOW.

I ALREADY
KNOW THE
ANSWER.

- NO...

NEVER
MIND.

AYUMU!

I HURT
ALL THAT
PAIN...

WHEE!

I FEEL
LIKE I'M
GONNA
HURL...
IS IT
BECAUSE
OF THIS
WOUND?

DON'T
TOUCH
ME!

SLAP

ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT?
YOU DON'T
LOOK SO
GOOD.

WATER FOR
SUPPER GO
TO THE
KITCHEN -

I'M GOING
BACK TO THE
CLASSROOM.
THE NEXT
CLASS WILL
BE STARTING.





IT WAS...
DRAINING TO
HAVE TO SLEEP
WITH A WOMAN
I HATED —
MY OWN
STEPMOTHER —
BUT... THE
BOYFRIEND
SHE BROUGHT
HOME WAS
EVEN WORSE.

YOU SEE,
IT SEEMS
HE ENJOYED
TORTURING
YOUNG
BOYS.

EVEN ON
THE DAY
ATEUSHI
DIED,
THAT'S
WHAT I
WAS —

I USED TO
FEEL LIKE
THIS ALL
THE TIME.

FORGETTING
EVERYTHING
EVERYDAY



FORGET IT —
IT'S TOO
STRENUOUS
TO THINK
ANYMORE.

...DON'T
LOOK AT
ME LIKE
THAT.

OR DO
YOU WANT
TO HEAR
MORE?

I'VE GOT
TONS MORE
AMUSING
STORIES
LIKE THIS.

I MIGHT AS
WELL JUST
DESTROY
EVERYTHING.



HAVE
YOU
COME
TOP?

AYUMU-
KUN!

THEN I'M
SURE TO
FEEL
BETTER.



AYUMU!



I THINK
YOU'RE
PROBABLY
OKAY...
BUT YOU
SHOULD HAVE
YOURSELF
CHECKED OUT
AT THE
HOSPITAL.

HAVE
YOU BEEN
GETTING
PROPER
SLEEP
LATELY? WHAT ABOUT
MEALS?



...YES.

YOU SHOULD
STAY IN BED.
YOUR MOTHER
SAID SHE'S
COMING TO
PICK YOU UP.



IT'S UNDER-
STANDABLE.



THAT'S
FUNNY —
HE WAS
HERE
JUST A
MINUTE
AGO.

HUH...P
OH...



...WHERE'S
KRISHNAP?



...SORRY
...IT'S JUST
THAT I'M
A BIT —



FORGET
IT!

STAY
OUT OF
THIS.

WANT ME
TO GO
LOOK
FOR HIM?



...IT'S
ALRIGHT.
YOU DON'T
HAVE TO
HIDE IT.

I
SUSPECTED
AS MUCH
ANYWAY.



ARE YOU
SAYING...

...THAT EVEN
IF WE ARE
TWINS, WE
SHOULD HAVE
GROWN UP
WITH DIFFERENT
PERSONALITIES
SINCE WE WERE
RAISED APART?



NO,
THAT'S
NOT
WHAT I
MEANT.



...WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

BECAUSE
YOU'RE
TOO
MUCH LIKE
ATSURU.

THAT'S
NOT
HOW YOU
REALLY
ARE, IS IT?
AYURU-
KUN.



AND
YET...

IT'S NOT
EVEN A
YEAR SINCE
HE PASSED
AWAY.

YOU RESEMBLE
ATSUSHI
SO CLOSELY,
EVERYONE
SEEMS
TO HAVE
FORGOTTEN
BUT...



ARE YOU
IMPLYING I'M
ENJOYING THIS
SITUATION?



SO THERE
WAS STILL
ONE OF YOU
HOPEFULS
AROUND,
HUN?

I
WOULDN'T
GO SO
FAR,
BUT...



AND BESIDES,
DO IT ENOUGH
TIMES AND YOU
JUST BECOME
ADDICTED TO IT.
WHETHER YOU
LIKE IT OR NOT.

I
SUPPOSE
I'VE
GOTTEN
USED TO
BEING
WITH MEN
BY NOW.



WELL,
I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE
AFTER BUT...
SORRY —
I DON'T
LIKE
WOMEN.



- BUT...

IT'S DIFFERENT
WITH TOMORU,
RIGHT?



AYUMI!



WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT? HE'S
NO LONGER
INVOLVED —







I KNOW YOU
HAVEN'T BEEN
ABLE TO REST
WELL SINCE
COMING TO
THIS HOUSE.

YOU
SHOULD
GET
SOME
SLEEP.



I'M
ALRIGHT.



AFTER ALL,
IT'S BEEN
TEN YEARS.

I SHOULD
HAVE TAKEN
THE TIME TO
EXPLAIN...
ABOUT MANY
THINGS.

THAT DAY, I
WAS SO HAPPY
TO SEE YOU
AGAIN THAT I
COULDN'T KEEP
FROM CALLING
OUT TO YOU.
BUT —



IT'S ALMOST
AS IF I'M
VIEWING SOME
FAR-OFF
SCENERY...

...FROM BACK
WHEN I WAS
A CHILD —

AYUMI...

I'M FINE NOW.
LET'S GO OUT
TO DINNER OR
SOMETHING
ONCE YOU
GET BACK.

...YES.
ALRIGHT.

AREN'T
YOU
GOING
TO GET
THAT?

TOO...
TOO...

IT'S ONLY
3 PM. WHY
DON'T YOU
GO BACK
TO THE
OFFICE?

IT'S
PROBABLY
JUST
ABOUT
WORK.

SEE
YOU
LATER.

AND IT
WAS JUST
MY MOTHER,
STELLA,
AND ME.

MY FATHER
HARDLY
EVER SPENT
ANY TIME
AT HOME.

EVEN BEFORE
OUR PARENTS
SEPARATED.



I GUESS
I'LL GET
CHANGED,
FOR
STARTERS.
THEN —



A HAPPY
TIME —



WHAT IS ONCE
SHATTERED
CAN NEVER —

BUT EVEN THOSE
MEMORIES HAVE
BEEN HARPED...
THINGS WILL
NEVER BE LIKE
THEY WERE.



I DON'T
KNOW.

ATSUSHI —

NOW I'VE
LOST EVEN
THE ONE
LAST PLACE
WHERE I
COULD
REMAIN —

I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT I
SHOULD
DO.

DING
DONG







YOU...

WHAT ARE
YOU - P

BECAUSE IT
WAS THE
SAME AS
ATSUSHI'S...

I WAS
JUST...

...CUTTING
MY HAIR.





WHAT
DO YOU
WANT ME
TO DO?



AYUMU.

OW...



SAY
IT...

MY
NAME...



TELL ME -

WHO IS THE
ONE THAT'S
HERE?

AYUMU.

AYUMU.





ON THE DAY
OF ATSUSHI'S
FUNERAL...
MY MOTHER
ASKED IF I'D
LIKE TO GO
AND LIVE WITH
HER.

IT STARTED
OUT SIMPLY
ENOUGH.

AT THE TIME,
I WAS ALREADY
OUT ON MY
OWN — SO IT
DIDN'T MAKE
ANY DIFFERENCE
TO ME WHERE
I'D BE LIVING.

SHE GAVE ME MY
OWN ROOM AND
I WAS GOING
TO LIVE MY LIFE
AS I'D ALWAYS
DONE —



...UNTIL I
FOUND
THOSE IN
ATSUSHI'S
ROOM.



EVERYTHING
I NEVER
HAD...



PROOF LEFT
BEHIND OF
HOW HAPPY
HE'D BEEN



HE'D REMAINED
PURE AND
UNBULLIED.

WHY
ONLY
YOU?



MY HATE
BECAME AS
GREAT AS
THE LOVE
I'D HAD
FOR HIM.

I KNOW MY
REGRETMENT
WAS
UNREASONABLE.

BUT I
COULDN'T
STOP
MYSELF.

I'LL USURP THE POSITION
YOU ATTAINED.

I'LL SHED EVERYTHING OF MY OWN SELF
AND BECOME "MITSURU" -

THEN, SURELY THINGS WILL
ALL WORK OUT.

THAT WAS THE BEGINNING -





YOU SAID THAT
ATUSHI HAD
EVERYTHING
YOU NEVER
HAD, BUT -

I THINK
YOU'RE
WRONG
ABOUT
THAT.

*YOU'RE
ALIVE.*

YOU'RE
ALIVE AND
STILL IN
THIS
WORLD.

THAT'S
SOMETHING
ATUSHI WILL
NEVER AGAIN
BE ABLE TO
HAVE -



...YEAH.

THIS WAS THE
FIRST TIME
I CRIED FOR
ATSUSHI.



ARE YOU
SURE
YOU
WANT
ME TO
LEAVE?



...
YOU...
I BET
YOU'RE
REALLY A
PLAYER,
AREN'T
YOU??

YOU WANT
I SHOULD BE
THE ONE TO
MAKE YOU
CRY FOR
ONCE??



HA
HA
HA —

YOU REALLY
ARE DIFFERENT
FROM HOW I'D
IMAGINED.

THE
GIRL
WHO
WILL BE
ACTING
ALL
TIME



WELL,
SEE YOU
TOMORROW.



THAT'S WHY
I ALWAYS
WONDERED
WHAT KIND
OF GUY YOU
WERE.



YOU AND
ATSUSHI —
WHAT
WERE...?



WE WERE
FRIENDS.

WE USED
TO BUMP
INTO EACH
OTHER ON
THE ROOF
A LOT.

ALL HE
EVER
TALKED
ABOUT
WAS YOU.



AYUMI...

THE WHOLE
TIME -



BUT THAT'S
REALLY HOW
I FEEL.



...I HAVE
A TWIN
BROTHER.

SO I'M
IMAGINING
WHAT HE MUST
BE DOING
RIGHT NOW.

...WAS
THAT TOO
CORNYP?

AT LEAST THE
SKY WE'RE
UNDER IS
CONNECTED.

INTANGIBLE
THROUGH HIS
PRESENCE
AMY BE.

SO HE WAS
WITH ME
THE WHOLE
TIME..

I KNOW IT
NOW ..

HE WAS
ALWAYS
THERE
WITH ME.

OR FEEL
THE TOUCH
OF HIS
HAND -

ALTHOUGH
I COULDN'T
HEAR HIS
VOICE -

AND THE WORLD
I'D LOST,

RETURNING IN
WINGED DESCENT.

othello

SNOW WHITE

in summer



WITH SKIN
AS WHITE AS
SNOW AND LIPS
AS RED AS A
ROSE, SHE WAS
NAMED "SNOW
WHITE."



ONCE UPON
A TIME, IN A
CERTAIN LAND,
A PRINCESS
WAS BORN.

SUMMER —

SAKAMOTO-
KUN.

HAVING
TRANSFERRED TO THIS
SCHOOL MID-
SEMESTER,

I DON'T
LIKE TELLING
SUCH A
SCARY TALE
ANY MORE
THAN THE
NEXT PERSON,
BUT —

HERE I AM,
BEING FORCED
TO LISTEN TO
THIS OFF-BEAT
CONVERSATION
OF MY
CLASSMATES.

IT CAN'T
BE HELPED,
YAMASHITA-
KUN.

THIS IS THE
ONLY WAY
TO PREVENT
BLOOD-
SHED...

KUSAKABE!
DON'T GO ANY
FURTHER THAN
THAT! DO YOU
INTEND TO PUT
OUR LIVES
IN DANGER,
TOO?!



...HEY.

WHAT THE
HELL ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT
ANYWAY?

WEREN'T YOU
SUPPOSED TO
DISCUSS SCARY
HORROR STORIES
ABOUT THIS
SCHOOL?



HOW IS
THAT A
HORROR
STORY?

ANY WHICH
WAY I LOOK
AT IT, IT'S THE
FAIRYTALE
ABOUT SNOW
WH-...

GA AHH!

SHHH -
SHUT UP,
SAKAMOTO!!!



WELL, IT'S
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT.





3
DONG - DING

BUT NO ONE
DARES CALL
HIM BY HIS
FIRST NAME
"ENDOU"
DIRECTLY TO
HIS FACE.

I LEARNED
OF THIS
ABOUT A
WEEK AGO.

WE HAVE
A NEW
STUDENT
IN CLASS
TODAY.

HIS NAME
IS KAGURU
SAKAMOTO.

SAKAMOTO -
KUN USED
TO LIVE HERE IN
TOWN AS A
CHILD, AND...

AND I'LL
KILL
YOU.



THIS GUY'S
NAME IS
SHOU
HANUO.



...NANJO?



THERE'S
AN EMPTY
DESK NEXT
TO NANJO.

LET'S
SEE...

NOW, IN THE
SECOND
YEAR OF
HIGH SCHOOL,
THERE ARE
HARDLY ANY
FACES I
REMEMBER -

I MAY HAVE
ONCE LIVED
HERE, BUT
THAT WAS
BEFORE I
WAS EVEN IN
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL.



NANJO...
AS IN
"SNOW" - ?

ARE YOU THE
SAME "SNOW"
WHO USED TO
LIVE NEXT
DOOR TO US?







AAAHHH!!
WHERE DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE
GOING?!

DON'T
ACT SO
FAMILIAR!

I DON'T
KNOW
YOU!

CLATTER

SLAM

I WAS
WORRIED
FOR YOU
THAT
TIME. I TELL
YA.

THE
WIND
BLEW
HARD



YOU'RE ABOUT
THE ONLY ONE
WHO'S CALLED
NANJO-KUN BY
HIS FIRST NAME
AND LIVED TO
TELL ABOUT IT.

MOST PEOPLE
ARE FOOLED
BY THAT FACE
OF HIS AND
GET TAKEN
OUT PRETTY
QUICKLY.

BUT I
WONDER
WHY HE
HATES
IT SO MUCH —

...BEING
CALLED
"SNOW."



HOW
SHOULD I
KNOW?

DAMMIT,
SAKAMOTO!
WHY?

I'VE
NEVER
HEARD
THAT!

WE'VE BEEN
IN THE SAME
CLASS WITH
NANJO SINCE
JUNIOR HIGH
BUT —

WHA
T?!

WAIT!
YOU
COULDN'T
SEE

COME ON,
PEY JAY —
CLIPPING
WILL BE
STARTING

HE
DOESN'T
EVEN
SEEM TO
REMEMBER
WHO I AM.

SLEEPING
TO DEATH

THAT'S
RIGHT —
HOW
SHOULD I
KNOW...

...WHY
BAGGY HAS
CHANGED SO
MUCH?



...BUT I
REMEMBER
HIM.



"KAGORI!"



That
nature

BUT IT
LOOKS
GOOD
ON YOU.
I LIKE IT.



M...
MY OLDER
SISTER
KEEPS
DRESSING
ME UP LIKE
A GIRL.



KAGORI...

HELP ME!



I'M NOT
THE
SAME...

...AS
HOW YOU
USED TO
KNOW ME --
AM I?





I WAS
PISSED OFF
THEN.

OH -
RIGHT.

YOU SAID
YOU DIDN'T
REMEMBER
ME!



TH...

THAT'S...

IT'S ALL
YOUR
FAULT.



WHAT...



NEVER
MIND
THAT.

AREN'T YOU
CURIOUS
ABOUT
WHY I'VE
CHANGED?

WHAT?

WHAT'S WRONG,
SAKAMOTO?
CLASS IS IN
SESSION.

...WHAT DO
YOU MEAN
BY THAT?

SNOW
CHANGED...
BECAUSE OF
ME...?

KAGORI
ARE YOU
AWAKE?

YOU'LL
BE LATE!



GOOD MORNING.

KUSAKABE -



WHAT'S WRONG?
YOUR EYES
ARE ALL
RED.

OH...
JUST A
LITTLE
LACK OF
SLEEP.



WHY
IS IT MY
FAULT - ?

I CAN'T
THINK OF
ANY
REASON...



COULD
IT
HAVE...

...SOMETHING
TO DO WITH
HAND-KUNP



...YEAH.

OH...
SORRY...



WELL, I'M
HEADING
THIS WAY —
SEE YOU.

THAT'S
NOT WHAT
I MEANT...!

N... NO,
THAT'S NOT
WHAT I — !

HONEST,
AREN'T
YOU?

YOU
NEED TO
GET
THE DAILY
JAP

GRIN

GRIN

O...
DAMNIT — !

WE WERE
ONLY IN
KINDERGARTEN
WHEN I FIRST
MET SNOW...

NOW THAT I
THINK ABOUT IT,
HE'S THE GUY
ONE FOR EVEN
REMEMBERING
ANYTHING.

BUT
THAT'S
EASIER
SAID — ...

WHY DO I
HAVE TO BE SO
FLUSTERED
BY SOMEONE
LIKE SNOW?

I'M GONNA
FIGURE IT OUT
AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE AND
GET THIS
OVER WITH!



I SAID I
REMEMBERED
SNOW, BUT...

MAYBE
I'M REALLY
THE ONE
WHO DOESN'T
REMEMBER...



WHAT ABOUT
SNOW - P



YAMASHITA -

DO YOU
HAPPEN TO
KNOW WHERE
SNOW WENT?

2-B



I SEE...

I THOUGHT IT'D
BE QUICKER TO
JUST ASK HIM
DIRECTLY, BUT...



...HE SHOULD
BE COMING
BACK SOON.

I SAW HIM
LEAVE THE
CLASSROOM
EARLIER,
BUT...

ROOM
WILL BE
STARTING



AWW, DON'T
LOOK SO
DISAPPOINTED.

AS
IF!

あ
は
は
YANK は
HAHAHAHA は
HAHAHAHA!

I KNOW
NANJIO IS
CUTE AND
ALL, BUT -

は は は は





...I
MISSED
THE
CHANCE
TO ASK
HIM...

SOMEHOW...



WASTED
THE
CHANCE
TO ASK
HIM...



ALONG!

TURN



SORRY -

NANJO!



TAKE THESE
BACK TO THE
REFERENCE
ROOM ON
YOUR WAY
OUT. WOULD
YOU?

NANJO,
YOU'VE GOT
NO AFTER-
SCHOOL CLUB
ACTIVITIES,
RIGHT?









SNOW...

I'M TOO
EARLY!
I'M ABOUT TO
BE LATE!
IT'S TERRIBLE!

BE MORE
CAREFUL!

YOU
ALWAYS
GO KLUTZY
AT THE
ODDEST
TIMES!



TELL
ME --

WHAT DID
I EVER DO
TO YOU?

YOU
MEAN...?





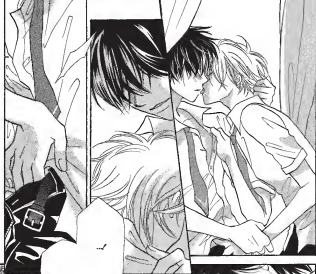
BY THAT
LOOK, I
CAN TELL
YOU DON'T
REMEMBER.

THEN AGAIN,
IF YOU HAD, I
SUPPOSE YOU
WOULDN'T HAVE
BEEN ABLE TO
SPEAK TO ME
AGAIN SO
CASUALLY...
WOULD YOU?

BUT I THINK
I WOULD'VE
REMEMBERED
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT
HAPPENING
WITH ANOTHER
GUY...

OR HAVE I
REALLY JUST
FORGOTTEN?

I...
DON'T
REMEMBER
ANYTHING
LIKE THAT!



SNOW...





OH MY,
IT'S ALL SO
DREARY.

...SNOW?







IT'S
TRUE THAT
SNOW HAS
CHANGED...
BUT --

...AND WHAT
IF I *CAN'T*
MANAGE TO
DO THAT?

"THE ONE
HERE NOW
IS A TOTALLY
DIFFERENT,
SEPARATE
PERSON."

JUST
THINK TO
YOURSELF,
"I NEVER MET
THAT 'SNOW'
AGAIN."



WOULDN'T
THAT LIGHTEN
YOUR SPIRIT
A LITTLE BIT?

THEN I GUESS
YOU'LL JUST
HAVE TO GO
ALONG WITH
HIM, DESPITE
THAT.



"SNOW" IS
STILL "SNOW"



IS MY
MEMORY
REALLY
THIS BAD?

BUT WHAT'S
HE MEAN I
"REJECTED"
HMP

I'M
THE ONE
WHO NEVER
NOTICED.

STANDING THERE,
LOOKING AS IF HE
WAS GOING TO
CRY ANY MINUTE —





THEN EVEN
BEFORE THAT...?"

- IT CAN'T
BE!



COME ON -
REMEMBER...
REMEMBER!



THE
BOUNDARY
BETWEEN
THE "SNOW"
IN THE PAST
AND THE
PRESENT
"SNOW"...

IN OTHER
WORDS, THAT
WOULD BE
THE LAST DAY
WE MET...?"



NOW THAT
I THINK OF
IT, HE DIDN'T
SHOW UP ON
THE DAY I
WAS MOVING
AWAY.





SO, YOU
FINALLY
REMEMBER!

IT'S
AMAZING HOW
THE MINDWORKS
WILL READ!

THE LAST
TIME I MET
SNOW —

...WAS AT THE
KINDERGARTEN
GRADUATION
CEREMONY.

...I WAS
SNOW
WHITE.





...WHAT WAS
I SUPPOSED
TO DO?

...SO WHEN YOU
TOLD ME TO MY
FACE THAT YOU
PREFER THE
"REAL SNOW
WHITES" WHO
WAS A GIRL...



- YOU
GOT IT
WRONG.



AND
THAT'S
HOW YOU
REJECTED
ME!

YOU!

EVEN AS A
KID, I FELT
THERE WAS
SOMETHING
STRANGE
ABOUT LIKING
ANOTHER BOY.

BUT I
THOUGHT
YOU WOULD
UNDERSTAND.





SORRY.



I SEE...
I GET
YOUR
PLAN

YOU THINK YOU
CAN JUST WIPE
OUT THE PAST
WITH THAT
ONE WORD?!

"SORRY?!"



...SORRY.

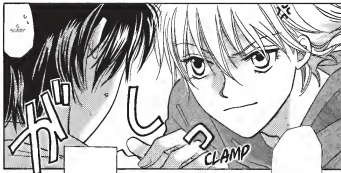


SUCH A
TEMPERAMENTAL
SNOW WHITE...

THEN WHAT
ELSE AM I
SUPPOSED
TO DO?!

QUIT
APOLOGIZING!
IT PISSES
ME OFF!

IF THAT'S
ALL
I WANT
TO SAY
I'M
SAYING
I'M
SAYING



BUT EVEN
THEN —

IT'S A
HAPPY
ENDING.

WELL...
LET'S
SEE...

I GUESS
I'LL START
BY HAVING
YOU UNDO
THIS
CURSE.

Oh, water
works

FIRST —

SNOW WHITE
in summer

END

夜半の聲香

よわ

かをり

THE SCENT
OF MIDNIGHT





MASANARI-SAN!

THAT'S FUNNY...
HE WAS IN
THE STUDY
JUST A
MOMENT
AGO.

MASANARI-SAN!

WHERE
ARE YOU?



NO NEED
TO HURRY.

I'M JUST
THANKFUL
HE'S EVEN
GRANTED ME
AN INTERVIEW.

MIYAJI-SAMA
FROM TOKYO
PUBLISHING
IS HERE.

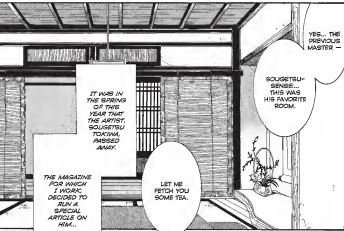


I'M SORRY
— I'LL JUST
GO LOOK
FOR HIM.



THIS IS
QUITE A
ROOM.

PLEASE
COME
AND WAIT
INSIDE.



YES... THE
PREVIOUS
MASTER —

SOUGETSU-
SENSEI...
THIS WAS
HIS FAVORITE
ROOM.

IT WAS IN
THE SPRING
OF THIS
YEAR THAT
THE ARTIST,
SOUGETSU
TODAMA,
RAISED
ANNEY.

THE MAGAZINE
FOR WHICH
I WORK,
DECIDED TO
RUN A
SPECIAL
ARTICLE ON
HIM...

LET ME
FETCH YOU
SOME TEA.



I WISH
I COULD
HAVE MET
HIM WHILE
HE WAS
ALIVE...

...ALTHOUGH
IT WOULD
PROBABLY
HAVE BEEN
IMPOSSIBLE.
HE WAS
NOTORIOUSLY
MEDIA-SHY.

...WHICH IS
WHY I'M
HERE FOR
RESEARCH.



BECAUSE SO
FEW HAD EVER
MET HIM, ANY
STORY ABOUT HIM
COULD ONLY BE
CLASSIFIED AS
WERE RUMOR.

BUT MORE
WORTHY OF
ATTENTION THAN
ANY OF THAT
WAS HIS ART -

HIS DISLIKE
OF PEOPLE KEPT
HIM STUBBORNLY
RECLUSIVE, AND
HE HAD LIVED
ALONE WITH ONLY
HIS SON THESE
LAST FEW YEARS.



HOW
STARTLING...



...YOU'RE
DIFFERENT.



...LIKE THE
SUBJECT OF
SOUGETSU-
GENJI'S
PAINTINGS.



YOU
LOOK SO
EXACTLY...



PARDON?

YOU'RE THE
FIRST PERSON
TO SAY
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT TO
MY FACE.

*I ONLY BECAME
AWARE OF MY
BLUNDER -*

*AFTER I GOT
BACK TO THE
OFFICE.*



SEKITANI...
DID YOU
KNOW,
THAT?

BUSTLE

BUSTLE



WELL,
EXCUSE
ME FOR
NOT
KNOWING!

OF
COURSE.

THERE'S AN
INFAMOUS
RUMOR
SAYING THAT
SEKITANI'S
FOSTER SON
WAS ACTUALLY
HIS LOVER.



WHAT
ARE YOU
STUPID?

YOU WENT
OVER THERE
NOT KNOWING
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT?

WE'RE NOT A
GOSSIP RAG
LIKE YOURS.
YOU SEE.

HEY!

HAVE YOU
GOT THAT
MANUSCRIPT
READY?

IT'S
NOT
READY.

CLATTER

AND WHO'S
THE ONE
WHO CAME TO
THIS "GOSSIP
RAG" FOR
INFORMATION,
HUH?

RED
SOUND!

はん
ど
THUMP

IT'S JUST
THAT IT
WAS SUCH
A SHOCK.

...I NEVER
REALIZED
THAT THE
MODEL
FOR HIS
PAINTINGS
WAS *MALE*.

I SUPPOSE
IT MADE NO
DIFFERENCE,
AS LONG
AS HE'S
BEAUTIFUL..

...SORRY.
I DIDN'T
MEAN IT
LIKE THAT.



HOW
DID
WHAT
GOP?

THE
INTERVIEW,
MANN?



YOU NEVER
KNOW WITH
ARTISTS.

...DO YOU
REALLY
THINK
THAT'S
HOW IT IS?

...GOP
HOW'D
IT GOP?



O... OH.
HE SAID HE
DIDN'T FEEL
WELL SO HE
CANCEL-...

...AH -
SO I
GUESSED I
MUST HAVE
OFFENDED
HIM AFTER
ALL.

MIYAJI -
THE SAME
AS
ALWAYS.



SEKITANI-
SAN!

LET'S HAVE
A DRINK
LATER. WE'LL
PARTY.

YOU
SUCK
OF
COURSE



BUT
THAT'S
WHAT'S
SO GOOD
ABOUT
YOU.

DON'T
LET IT
GET YOU
DOWN.



COME IN.



IS MIYAJI-SAN HERE?

THERE'S A PHONE CALL FROM MASANARI TOKIWA.



TH... THANK YOU.



ISN'T THE HOUSEKEEPER HERE TODAY?



OH... NO, SHE DOESN'T COME EVERY DAY.



IS THERE
SOMETHING
WRONG
WITH THAT?

YOU'VE BEEN
REALLY QUIET.
DIDN'T YOU
COME HERE
TO WORK?



HAHA...
I SEE.

SOMEONE
SAID
SOMETHING
TO YOU.
BHP



YES...
UH...

IT'S
JUST —

I WAS
AMAZED
THAT YOU
INVITED ME
BACK...



UH!
THAT IS...
THAT'S
NOT
WHAT I
MEANT
TO SAY...

SOUGETSU-
SENSHI WAS
AN ARTIST.
AFTER ALL, AND
WITH SUCH
A BEAUTIFUL
PERSON LIKE
YOU...

I DON'T
THINK TWO
MEN BEING
TOGETHER IS
INDECENT OR
ANYTHING...

NO...
UH... HUH?



IT WASN'T
BECAUSE YOU
OFFENDED ME.

DON'T
WORRY.

I REALLY
WASN'T
FEELING
WELL...

ABOUT
YESTERDAY...



DUGGING
HIS
OWN
GRAVE.



SLAT



ANYWAY...

DID YOU
COME HERE
TO TALK
ABOUT
BOUGETSUP
OR ME?



MIYAJI-
SAN.

WOULD
YOU LIKE
ME TO
SHOW
YOU THE
STUDIO?



I TOLD
YOU,
DIDN'T I?
IF YOU
DON'T
HAVE TO
WORRY.



I BEG
YOUR
PARDON.



WHY AM I SO
FLUSTERED
TALKING TO A
MERE CHILD
LIKE THIS? I'M
ASHAMED OF
MYSELF.

RIGHT?



MAY I
TAKE
SOME
PHOTOS?

HOW
STRANGE.



GO
RIGHT
AHEAD.

WHAT
IS?



...WHILE I'M
LOOKING AT
SOUGETSU-
GENGE'S
PAINTINGS.





BY
THE WAY,
MIYAJI-
SAN...

WELL,
THEN, I
GUESS
THAT'LL
BE ALL...

I'LL BE
SURE TO
CONTACT
YOU LATER
ON.

YOU...
SEEM TO HAVE A
MISCONCEPTION.
SO I'LL
INFORM YOU.

SOUGETSU
NEVER
LOVED ME.

*NOT
EVER.*

WHAT
ARE YOU
SPACING
OUT OVER?

MIYAJI.

I'M
CONFUSED.

鍋料理





I
DON'T
GET IT...

MAYBE THERE
WAS SOME
CIRCUMSTANCE
WHERE HE
HAD TO STAY
THERE...?"



THE NIGHT
COMES -

THE
NIGHT OF
THAT
BLUE
MOON...

HE NEVER
LOVED HER

THEN
WHY IS
HE THERE
AT THAT
HOUSE?"



—LHN—

—LUCIANARI—









IT'S JUST
FOR A
SKETCH.
ALL YOU'D
HAVE TO
DO IS SIT
THERE.

OHAY?



ALRIGHT!

OH N-NO...
NOT ME —
I COULDN'T
DO SOME-
THING LIKE
THAT...



NO. IT'S JUST
THAT YOU
SEEM MORE
YOUR AGE
RIGHT NOW.



IT'S
PROBABLY
THE
LIGHT.

THAT
HOUSE IS
ALWAYS
DARK,
EVEN IN
THE DAY.

I DON'T
THINK
THAT'S THE
ONLY
REASON...



...WHAT?

YOU'RE...
STILL
AROUND
16 OR SO,
RIGHT?

BUT
WHENEVER I
SEE YOU AT
THAT MANSION,
I GET A
DIFFERENT
IMPRESSION...

THAT PALE,
WHITE SKIN -

HIS SLIGHTLY
LIGHT-COLORED
HAIR AND EYES -

IS IT...

JUST MY
IMAGINATION...?

THE AURA
THAT
SEEMED TO
CLING TO
HIM -...

THEY'RE
STILL THE
SAME,
AND YET...





OKAY.

SIT
THERE.



WHAT
SHOULD
I DO?

I'VE NEVER
DONE
ANYTHING
LIKE THIS
BEFORE.
SO...



SCRATCH



RELAX.

JUST GAZE
OUTSIDE
OR SOME-
THING.



THIS IS SUCH
A GORGEOUS
MANSION...

AND YET,
SOMEHOW,
THE YARD
SEEMS
RATHER
COLORLESS
AND EMPTY.



...WELL...
AT THE
BEGINNING
OF EACH
SUMMER...

...THAT
YARD USED
TO FILL WITH
THE SWEET
SCENT
OF THE
GARDENIAS...

...AND THE
WHITE
FLOWERS
WERE
BEAUTIFUL
TO SEE,
EVEN AT
NIGHT.



OH -

I'M SORRY
IF I
OFFENDED
YOU.



SO DID
THEY ALL
WILT AWAY
OR SOME-
THING?

BUT THEN,
SEEING MR.
SOUGETSU -

...HAD EVERY
LAST FLOWER
AND TREE IN
THE GARDEN
CUT DOWN.

...
...I OFTEN
USED TO
GAZE OUT AT
THE YARD,
JUST AS
YOU'RE
DOING NOW.



THE
FLOWERS...?

BUT
WHY...?

WEREN'T YOU
LISTENING?

YESTERDAY



IF YOU CALL
FORCIBLY
TAKING MY
BODY TO
GAIN TOTAL
SUBMISSION,
THEN —

...I GUESS
YOU COULD
CALL HIS
FEELINGS
FOR ME
"LOVE,"
TOO.



YOU
MEAN —

ABOUT
SOUGETSU
SENSEI NEVER
HAVING LOVED
YOU...P



BUT...

...THERE'S
NO WAY
THAT
COULD
BE.



WANT ME
TO TELL YOU
SOMETHING
INTERESTING?



MIYAJI-
SAN.

SOUGETSU
AND I...
WERE
ACTUALLY
HALF-
BROTHERS.



SOUGETSU'S
FATHER HAD
AN AFFAIR...
AND I'M THE
RESULT OF
THAT UNION.

AFTER
SOUGETSU'S
MOTHER FOUND
OUT ABOUT IT,
SHE COMMITTED
SUICIDE.



YOU'RE
A KIND
MAN,
SO...

...I'LL LET
YOU IN ON
A SECRET
NO ONE
ELSE
KNOWS.

A SECRET
ABOUT ME
AND
SOUGETSU.



SO IT'S REALLY
NO WONDER
THAT SOUGETSU
HAD THEM CUT
DOWN AFTER
FINDING OUT
ABOUT THAT.

...THE
GARDEN WAS
IN THIS
GARDEN
WERE MY
MOTHER'S
FAVORITE
FLOWER.

I HAD BEEN
LIVING WITH
MY OWN
MOTHER.
BUT -

IT WAS
FIVE YEARS
AGO THAT
SOUGETSU
CAME TO
TAKE ME IN.

SOUGETSU'S
FATHER MUST
HAVE HAD
THEM
PLANTED...

COULDN'T
YOU HAVE
JUST STAYED
WITH YOUR
OWN
MOTHER?

BUT
THAT'S...

YOU CAME
TO THIS
HOUSE
KNOWING
ALL THIS?

IT WAS
THE ONLY
THING I
COULD
DO.





I HAVE NO
WORDS I
CAN GIVE
HIM -

WHAT...

CAN I
DO?

WHAT'S
WRONG,
MIYAJI-
KUN?

YOU
SEEM
KIND OF
DOWN
LATELY.

AND...

BY
TELLING
ME ALL
THIS -

WHAT IS
IT YOU
WANT ME
TO DO?







THAT YARD IS
A LITTLE TOO
BARREN AND
LONELY.

THERE ARE
NO WORDS
I CAN SAY
TO YOU...

BUT
STILL...

...YOU'RE
WET..



THE PERFUME OF
THE FLOWERS WAS
OVERPOWERING -

...IT WAS
ENOUGH TO
MAKE MY
HEAD SWOON.





MIYAJI — !

I'VE COME
WITH
GET-WELL
WISHES.



REALLY —

CATCHING
A COLD AT
THIS TIME
OF YEAR...
WHAT A
WISS!

YEAH...
I GOT
CAUGHT IN
THE RAIN.
I WAS LAID
OUT FOR
THREE DAYS!



SEKTANI



OH, DON'T
MIND ME.

STAY
IN BED.
I'LL MAKE
MYSELF
AT HOME.



APPARENTLY
HE'S GOT
RELATIVES ON
HIS MOTHER'S
SIDE WHO
ARE LIVING
OVERSEAS.

THEY'RE
GOING
TO TAKE
HIM IN.



IT'S ABOUT
THE ARTIST
SOUGETSU'S
SON.

OH, YEAH —
SASAHARA
ASKED ME TO
GIVE YOU A
MESSAGE.



THERE
WAS A
PHONE
CALL TO
THE
OFFICE.

AND
SASAHARA
SAID SHE
GAVE HIM
YOUR CONTACT
INFORMATION...
HEY, ARE YOU
LISTENING?

...HEYA, KP

THE NEXT DAY
I VISITED THE
TORTUOSE
MANSION
BUT IT WAS
ALREADY IN
THE HANDS
OF A
STRANGER

FLOWERS,
NO DOUBT
PLANTED BY
THE NEW
OWNER, WERE
EVERYWHERE
IN WILD
BLOOM

THE
NIGHT -

IS NO
LONGER
HERE.

THE
SIGHT WAS
ENOUGH
TO MAKE
ME WEER

THE SCENT OF
MIDNIGHT
END

冥の淵

THE ABYSS
POOL





THANK
YOU.

I'M SORRY FOR
TROUBLING
YOU LIKE
THIS.
MOTHER-
IN-LAW.



RUJINARI-
SAN.

I'M
PUTTING
YOUR
THINGS
HERE.



IT'S SO
QUIET. IT'S
ALMOST
SERIE.

I'M SURE IT'S
GOOD FOR
YOUR WORK,
BUT WON'T
YOU FIND
THIS PLACE
RATHER
INCONVENIENT?



NO
TROUBLE,
BUT —

DID YOU
REALLY HAVE
TO MOVE TO
A PLACE
LIKE THIS?



YES.
BUT...

I DOUBT I'LL
BE GOING
OUT MUCH
ANYWAY.



I KNOW IT'S
ONLY BEEN SIX
MONTHS SINCE
RUI PASSED
AWAY AND YOU
MUST STILL BE
GRIEVING BUT...

YOU
CAN'T STAY
LIKE THIS
FOREVER.
YOU KNOW.



I AM A
WRITER.

SIX MONTHS
AGO, I LOST
MY WIFE...
AND HAVE
COME TO
SETTLE
DOWN HERE
ALONE.

OH,
YES.

WELL, THEN,
IF THERE'S
ANYTHING
YOU NEED...
DON'T
HESITATE
TO CALL.

MOTHER-
N-LAW...

YOUR
RETURN BUS
WILL BE
LEAVING
SHORTLY -



AND
PERHAPS
BECAUSE OF
THE GLOOMY
ATMOSPHERE
OF THE NEARBY
SHADE, THE
BRIGHT OF ANY
PASSERS-BY
IS A RARITY.

THEY SAY
THIS HOUSE
HAD BEEN
VACANT
BEFORE I
CAME -

SHAAA

RAIN...



I HAD
NO IDEA
SOMEONE
WAS
LIVING
HERE.

...I'M
SURPRISED.
THERE WAS
A LIGHT
SO I CAME
TO SEE,
BUT -

CLATTER



BAM
BAM

WHO
COULD
IT BE
AT THIS
LATE
HOURS?



I LIVE
NEAR HERE.

I USED
TO PLAY
AROUND
HERE
OFTEN AS
A CHILD.



IT'S LET UP.
I GUESS IT
WAS JUST
A SUDDEN
SHOWER.



GETTING
CAUGHT IN
THE RAIN...
HOW
UNLUCKY
I AM.



YOU
ARE...?



I'VE GOT
WORK
TO DO.

I'M SORRY
BUT COULD
YOU LEAVE
NOW?



...I DON'T
LIKE SUCH
STORIES.

THEY SAY A
DRAGON GOD
LIVES IN IT
AND HE
CONSUMES
MEN'S SOULS.

YOU KNOW
THAT SWAMP
NEAR HERE?

OH...

SO
YOU'RE A
WRITER.

THEN WHAT
ABOUT A
STORY LIKE
THIS?



THAT'S -

WHEN I
THOUGHT OF
MY WIFE WHO
HAD PASSED
AWAY AFTER A
LONG BOUT OF
ILLNESS, I FELT
GUILTY ABOUT
BEING THE ONLY
ONE TO LEAD
A HAPPY LIFE.



OH...
YOU'RE
NO FUN.

IT'S SUCH
A GOOD
RUMOR,
TOO.

SO WHY
DO YOU
CHOOSE
TO LIVE IN
A PLACE
LIKE THIS,
THEN?



...NONE
OF YOUR
BUSINESS.

THAT'S THE
REASON I
CHOSE THIS
PLACE.

LIAR.



WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT —

YOU —

...FEEL GUILTY
BECAUSE
YOU DID NOT
TRULY LOVE
YOUR WIFE.



...DEEP

BECAUSE
YOU —

...ARE
UNABLE
TO LOVE
WOMEN.



BA-
THUMP





PI

SMASH

NN..

UH..

UH..
AHH..

THIS -

IT'S
ALMOST
AS IF -

"YOU
KNOW THAT
SWAMP NEAR
HERE?"

"THEY SAY
A DRAGON
GOD LIVES IN
IT, AND HE
CONSUMES
MEN'S
SOULS."



BOOK...

THIS DREAM
WILL END.



IF ONLY I CAN
FORGET THE
SWEETNESS OF
THIS FALL -



THE ABYSS
POOL
END

AFTERWORD

TO EVERYONE WHO IS NEW TO ME AND TO THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE RETURNING, HELLO. THIS IS MY FIRST BOOK IN A WHILE FROM **OUTTOWNSHORE**. IT CONTAINS WORKS THAT CAME JUST BEFORE AND JUST AFTER THOSE IN MY PREVIOUS BOOK.

■ **OTHELLO** I WAS PLANNING TO REDRAW THE SECOND HALF, BUT THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW WHAT I WAS THINKING 2-3 YEARS AGO... SO, IN THE END, MOST OF IT IS EXACTLY AS IT WAS. AFTER I EVEN HAD MY MANAGING EDITOR LOOK OVER THE STORYBOARDS... SORRY AND THIS WILL PROBABLY BE MY LAST "SCHOOL" STORY

■ **SNOW WHITE** THIS WAS MY "BOY'S LOVE" DEBUT TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, BEFORE I GOT THIS JOB, I HAD NEVER EVEN READ A "BOY'S LOVE" (ANONYMOUS, AREN'T I?) STORY BEFORE... AND SO, THIS WAS MY OWN IMAGE OF WHAT A "BOY'S LOVE" STORY IS LIKE - I HAVEN'T READ IT BACK BECAUSE IT'S JUST TOO EMBARRASSING (HEH). BUT I CAN SEE THAT ALREADY AT THIS STAGE, I WAS RIND OF THE TEMPERAMENTAL-BUGEN-AS-BOTTOM-ROLE (LAUGH).

■ **THE SCENT OF MIDNIGHT** WHAT'S UP WITH THIS TITLE...? BUT OUT OF ALL MY WORKS, THIS IS THE ONE CLOSEST TO MY OWN TASTES. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ALL YOU READERS, BUT... BY THE WAY, THE BACKGROUND MUSIC TO THIS IS **PIAZZOLLA**.

■ **THE ABRYS POOL** AN ORIGINAL BONUS STORY HORROR. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE DRAWN SO MANY SEX SCENES. EEP (WHADDAYA MEAN, "EEP"?)



2002
TOMI HASUMI
2002